

City of Alameda Paratransit Rider Guide

Funded by Measures B and BB



Sponsored By: Mastick Senior Center





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www.AlamedaParatransit.com

City of Alameda Paratransit Program



Mastick Senior Center 1155 Santa Clara Avenue Phone: (510) 747-7513

Email: CityParatransit@alamedaca.gov

Transportation Services

Tuesday & Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Ticket Sales:

Tuesday & Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Paratransit Program Sponsor:

Mastick Senior Center – Transportation Office - (510) 747-7513

The City of Alameda's non-ADA-mandated Paratransit Program is supported entirely by funds from Measures B and BB, voter-approved ballot measures that set aside a portion of Alameda County sales tax revenue to fund transportation projects.

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Overview of Rider Guide

This guide describes the many transit options that are available in Alameda for seniors and people with disabilities. It goes into detail about four programs offered by the City of Alameda, to help you both understand and use them. And, it has brief overviews of programs offered by different agencies and organizations that are available to people living in Alameda. We hope you find it useful!

Accessible Public Transit

AC Transit, BART and the ferry service are flexible and economical options that offer enhanced access to their buses and trains for individuals with a disability or disabling health condition.

AC Transit, BART and the ferry services offer the following benefits:

- More than 100 regular routes operating throughout the East Bay and connecting with other Bay Area transit systems.
- Wheelchair accessible buses, ferries and accessible BART stations and trains, operating on timed schedules and requiring no advance reservations.
- Fares that are significantly less than those charged for Paratransit service.
 Seniors and people with disabilities also may be eligible for reduced fares on AC Transit and BART through the Regional Transit Connection Discount Card Program.

For more information, visit www.511.org or call 511.

East Bay Paratransit

East Bay Paratransit (EBP) is a public transit service for individuals who are unable to use AC Transit buses or BART trains because of a disability or a disabling health condition. East Bay Paratransit transports riders from their origin to their destination in vans equipped with a wheelchair lift. EBP operates in the same areas, on the same days and during the same hours as public transit. AC Transit and BART established EBP to meet requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

To use EBP services, and some City of Alameda paratransit services (as described below), you must apply and meet eligibility requirements.

For more information, contact East Bay Paratransit at:

1750 Broadway, Oakland (510) 287-5000 or 1-800-555-8085 www.eastbayparatransit.org

Applications are available from the East Bay Paratransit Offices, online at www.eastbayparatransit.org, as well as the Mastick Senior Center Transportation Office.

City of Alameda Paratransit Program

The City of Alameda Paratransit Program is designed to supplement and complement the ADA-mandated services provided by East Bay Paratransit (EBP). In addition to services for individuals with a disability or disabling health condition, the program offers trips for all seniors.

The City's Paratransit Program includes four core services:

- 1) Medical Return Trip Improvement Program (MRTIP)
- 2) Premium Taxi Service
- 3) Shuttle Service
- 4) Group Trips

Unless otherwise stated, the contact for all of these programs is the Mastick Senior Center Transportation Office - (510) 747-7513 or CityParatransit@alamedaca.gov.

Important!

The City of Alameda reserves the right to change the program based on funding availability.

1) Medical Return Trip Improvement Program (MRTIP)

What: The Medical Return Trip Improvement Program (MRTIP) provides transportation, via taxi, for individuals returning home from medical appointments. Participants call the City of Alameda's transportation provider - First American Transit, formerly named Welcome Transport Group - for a ride home after a medical appointment. Transportation must take place within Alameda County.

Who: This program is available to Alameda residents who are certified with East Bay Paratransit.

Cost: MRTIP vouchers are \$2.50 each, must be purchased in advance and expire after one year. Participants may purchase up to 10 MRTIP vouchers per month. Each voucher covers the cost of one trip. Financial assistance is available (see "How to use the Taxi Services" section below on page 13).

2) Premium Taxi Service

What: The Premium Taxi Service provides a 50 percent discount for taxi rides with the City of Alameda's transportation provider - First American Transit, formerly named Welcome Transport Group. Same day rides are available and require at least 30 minute advanced scheduling. Transportation must take place within Alameda County.

Who: This service is available to Alameda residents who are age 70 and older, or are EBP-certified.

Cost: Discount taxi vouchers cost \$2.50 each and have a \$5 value. Vouchers must be purchased in advance and expire after one year. Multiple taxi vouchers may be used per trip. Taxi drivers are not allowed to provide change. Participants are limited to a maximum of 20 Premium taxi vouchers per quarter (every 3 months). Financial assistance is available (see "How to use the Taxi Services" section below on page 13). Vouchers are non-transferable. The vouchers may not be used by anyone other than the person to whom they are issued.

3) Shuttle Service

What: The City of Alameda funds a regular fixed route shuttle that operates from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, and has a one hour frequency. There are three shuttle routes that provide access to shopping destinations and medical facilities, as follows:

- Tuesdays: West Loop (between Alameda Landing and downtown Alameda)
- Wednesdays: East Loop (between Bay Farm Island, downtown Alameda and Mastick Senior Center)
- Thursdays: Central Loop (between downtown Alameda, Shore Line Drive and Bridgeside Center/Nob Hill Market)

Shuttle schedules are available online at www.alamedaparatransit.com, and also at Mastick Senior Center, and other Alameda locations (Alameda Hospital, Library, etc.).

Passengers must be seated at all times. The driver can assist riders with:

- Boarding and exiting the shuttle;
- · Securing wheelchairs; and
- Carrying up to five bags of groceries or a folding shopping cart.

Who: The shuttle service is open to the public; however, the shuttle's primary purpose is to serve individuals with disabilities, disabling health conditions and the senior community. Passengers may be asked to vacate the shuttle to provide seating for the intended population.

Cost: Free, and users may take as many rides as they wish.

4) Group Trips

The City of Alameda Paratransit Program offers the following group trips:

Mastick Monthly Trip Program – Cost Varies

The City of Alameda assists with transportation expenses for the Mastick Senior Center monthly trip program. Travel destinations include Bay Area locations (i.e., San Francisco, Livermore, etc.). Trip Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, contact the Mastick Senior Center Transportation Office at (510) 747-7511 or CityParatransit@alamedaca.gov.

Leisure Club - Free

The City of Alameda transports participants to and from the Alameda Recreation and Park Department Leisure Club. This social and recreation program is designed for individuals with developmental disabilities, age 18 years or older, and meets twice a month. For more information, contact Alameda Recreation and Park Department at (510) 747-7529 or arpd@alamedaca.gov.

Crown Memorial Beach – Free

The City of Alameda subsidizes a portion of the transportation expense to Crown Memorial Beach for the Annual Nursing Home Picnic. For more information, please contact your nursing home.

How to use the Taxi Services (MRTIP and Premium)

Enrollment

To enroll in the MRTIP or Premium Taxi Service programs, visit the Mastick Senior Center Transportation Office or www.alamedaparatransit.com. Application forms are available online and in hard copy.

Scheduling a Ride

Taxi rides and dispatchers are available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year.

Reservations should be made at least 30 minutes prior to a trip and will be accepted up to four days in advance. **Participants requiring a lift-equipped vehicle should call the day before**



to ensure vehicle availability. Rides reserved on short notice will be accommodated based on vehicle availability. Confirming the travel reservation with the taxi vendor is recommended.

To schedule a ride, call the current City of Alameda taxi service provider:

• Premium and MRTIP Taxi Services: First American Transit (formerly named Welcome Transport Group) at (510) 522-8911

When speaking with the Taxi Dispatcher:

- State that you are:
 - A City of Alameda Paratransit Program participant;
 - Paying with a MRTIP or Premium Taxi Service Travel Voucher;
- Provide your:
 - Name and phone number;
 - Date of travel;
 - Pick-up address (specific location): number, street, suite number, city,
 zip and entry code for any security entrances (if applicable);
 - Requested **pick-up time** and the time of any appointment. (*This information is important for medical appointments.*);
 - Requested **return pick-up time**, necessary for round-trip travel;

- As applicable, also let the dispatcher know if you:
 - Require a lift-equipped vehicle (confirm whether the mobility device is transportable);
 - Require use of an assistive device (cane, walker, wheelchair scooter or other);
 - Require use of a child car seat (specify rear-facing or forward-facing).
 Parents or guardians are responsible for providing and installing appropriate child car seats and for securely fastening the child into the car seat;
 - Will be accompanied by a **personal care attendant or companion**(s);
 - Will be accompanied by a service animal;
 - Require special assistance from the driver (assistance carrying bags, help pushing your wheelchair to and from the vehicle, etc.);
 - Are transporting life support equipment; and
 - Provide any other information the taxi driver should know.

When making a reservation, the dispatcher will provide an approximate vehicle arrival time.

Allowable Number of Rides

MRTIP: Participants may purchase up to 10 MRTIP vouchers per month. **Premium Taxi Service:** Participants are limited to a maximum of 20 Premium taxi

vouchers per quarter (every 3 months).

Making Multiple Stops While Using the Taxi Service

To make multiple stops (e.g., grocery store, to post office, to bank, etc.), schedule all rides individually and ahead of time when making the reservation with the taxi service provider. Participants will need to pay for each segment (stop) of the taxi trip.

Taking your Ride

Participants must wait outside the designated pick-up point or in a sheltered location (e.g., inside home, front lobby of a building, etc.) where you will be able to tell that the taxi vehicle has arrived. A "no-show" status might be issued if a vehicle

is unable to enter the pick-up area. The vehicle may arrive early or late due to traffic or other unforeseen circumstances.

Drivers cannot wait while participants attend appointments, shop, run errands, etc. A driver will return at the scheduled pick-up time.

Vouchers must be **completed** prior to boarding the vehicle.

Using Your Ride Vouchers

To take a ride, participants must provide the taxi driver with completed travel vouchers. These vouchers must be completed <u>before</u> you are picked up by the taxi driver.

MRTIP: Present the taxi driver with the completed voucher.

Premium Taxi Service: Provide the taxi driver with <u>one</u> completed voucher to validate the trip. Upon arriving at the destination, provide the driver with additional Premium Taxi Service Voucher(s) to cover the fare, as needed.

Note: Each Premium Taxi Service Voucher has a value of \$5, and *drivers cannot provide change*. Either pay the entire fare using the travel voucher(s) or a combination of vouchers and cash. For example, if a trip costs \$12.00, either give the driver three vouchers (\$3.00 in change will not be provided), or two vouchers plus \$2.00 in cash.

Late Rides

If the vehicle has not arrived within <u>10 minutes</u> of the estimated pick-up time which you were given when you scheduled the ride, contact the taxi service provider to ensure the ride is on its way.

Canceling or Changing a Taxi Ride

Notify the taxi service provider **at least 15 minutes** before the scheduled pick-up time if you need to cancel or change your ride. You can call to cancel at any time of the day or night. Advance cancellation will prevent "no-show" status. A participant will receive a "no-show" status for the following:

- Failure to cancel a ride at least 15 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time;
 or
- Unprepared to board the vehicle within five minutes of its arrival.

The participant must contact the taxi service provider after receiving "no-show" status to confirm return taxi trips scheduled for the same day.

Note: The City of Alameda *must* pay for all late cancellations and "no-show" status trips. Participants engaging in this type of activity may be terminated from the City of Alameda Paratransit Program.

Financial Assistance is Available

The Transportation Scholarship Fund offsets the cost of transportation by providing matching funds for participants enrolled in the Premium Taxi Service. A limit of \$50 in matching funds per family is available each fiscal year (July 1 through June 30), as long as funding is available. Current proof of income is required (e.g., SSA/SSI award letter, paycheck stubs, etc.). Applications can be downloaded from the City's website (www.alamedaparatransit.com), and are also available in the Mastick Senior Center office.

Taxi Service Program Rules

Attendants, Companions and Children

If space is available, **up to three additional passengers** may accompany a Taxi Program participant at no extra charge.

Traveling with a **child**, all children until the age of eight must travel in a child safety seat to comply with California Law. The participant is responsible for safely securing the seat in the vehicle and placing the child safely and securely in the seat.

Participants may be required to travel with a caregiver or companion. This determination will be made on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the City of Alameda Paratransit Program.

Caregivers and companions must be picked up and dropped off at the same location as the participant.

Caregiver Responsibilities

A caregiver must be present at the pick-up and drop-off points for participants who cannot be left alone. If a responsible caregiver is not present when the driver attempts to pick-up or drop-off these riders, it can seriously disrupt the driver's schedule. The driver cannot serve as a caregiver. If the caregiver is absent, service to the participant may be suspended and the situation may be reported to Adult Protective Services or Child Protective Services, as appropriate.

Boarding with a Mobility Device

All wheelchair accessible vehicles used in this service are equipped with passenger lifts that meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Drivers are trained to operate the lift and to secure mobility devices on the vehicles. The vehicles will accommodate mobility devices such as wheelchairs and three-wheel scooters up to 48 inches by 30 inches and with a gross weight of up to 800 pounds including the rider. Mobility devices, which exceed these standards, may not be transportable. When making a reservation, confirm whether the mobility device is transportable.

If steps impede boarding, request a lift-equipped vehicle. The driver will assist with boarding the vehicle safely.

Traveling with a Scooter

In some cases, the driver will suggest that a participant traveling with a scooter transfer to a fixed seat during travel to enhance safety.

Transporting Packages

For the safety of all program participants, transporting flammable liquids, explosives or acids or other hazardous materials is prohibited.

Transporting Life Support Equipment

Participants may bring a respirator, portable oxygen, or other life support equipment as long as it does not violate laws or rules related to transportation of hazardous materials. Equipment must be small enough to fit into the vehicle and must be managed by the participant or caregiver.

Traveling with Animals

Service animals are permitted to travel with the participant. For safety reasons, pets and other non-service animals must be properly transported in a secured cage or container. When making a reservation, please inform the dispatcher that a service animal or non-service animal will be transported.

Rider and Driver Responsibilities

The City of Alameda has developed a list of Rider and Driver Responsibilities designed to ensure safety and comfort for all program participants as well as the drivers.

Rider Responsibilities

Riders have a responsibility to:

 Read and follow the Rider Guide instructions, and ask for clarification when needed.



- Make reservations for taxi trips at least 30 minutes or more in advance whenever possible. For lift-equipped vehicles, taxi reservations at least one day in advance are recommended.
- Arrive at pick-up locations **on time** including attendants and companions.
- **Provide entry** if the pick-up location is within a gated community or other place with special access.
- Call the taxi vendor if the vehicle has not arrived after **ten minutes** of the estimated pickup time.
- Avoid "no-shows".
- Complete the required information on the MRTIP or Premium Taxi Service Voucher <u>before</u> being picked up.
- At the beginning of a trip, present the driver with a MRTIP or Premium Taxi Service Voucher, as appropriate.
- Enter and exit the vehicle voluntarily.
- Wear seat belts and remain seated until the trip end.
- Treat drivers and dispatchers with courtesy.
- Avoid distracting the driver or interfering with the vehicle or equipment.
- Maintain wheelchairs and other mobility aids in safe condition according to manufacturer's specifications.
- Maintain acceptable standards of personal hygiene.
- Follow these common rules of courtesy:
 - No eating, drinking or smoking aboard the vehicle.
 - o No littering aboard the vehicle. Clean up after children and animals.

- No riding under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- No radios or other sound generating equipment permitted aboard the vehicle (earphones permitted).

Drivers retain the right to deny transportation to any program participant who fails to follow the policies outlined in the Rider Guide.

Driver Responsibilities

Drivers have a responsibility to:

- Limit cell phone use with hand-free devices while transporting passenger(s).
- Maintain acceptable standards of personal hygiene.
- Treat program participants with courtesy.
- Display photo identification badge.
- If requested, **assist program participants** when entering and leaving the vehicle. Drivers also may assist passengers to and from the main door of their origin or destination.
- Safely secure all mobility devices.
- Safely transport children in appropriately installed child car seats, if applicable.
- Allow passenger(s) to bring a respirator, portable oxygen tank, or other life support equipment, as long as it does not violate laws or rules related to the transportation of hazardous materials.
- Allow passenger(s) to travel with a **service animal**. Pets and other non-service animals must be properly transported in a secured cage or container.
- If requested, turn off or lower volume of radio or other amplified music.
- Carry only the rider along with attendants and companions who have reservations and no other passengers.

Passengers are encouraged to report drivers who do not adhere to the driver responsibilities outlined above.

Assistance Drivers Can Provide

"Driver Assistance" includes, but is not limited to:

• **Helping passengers** negotiate stairs, ramps, hills, doors or other obstacles that may be in their way between the doorway and the vehicle.

- Offering ambulatory passengers **a steadying arm** to walk to/from the doorway and to/from the paratransit vehicle.
- **Helping persons in wheelchairs** to maneuver between the main door of their origin or destination and the vehicle.
- Carrying up to three packages (up to 20 pounds each) from vehicle to door.
 Note that a manual-folding wheelchair is considered a package regardless of weight.

Drivers are not permitted to:

- Enter program participant residences.
- Perform any personal care assistance to program participants including, but not limited to, assisting program participants to dress.
- Lift or carry program participants or wheelchairs up or down steps.
- Escort program participants beyond the ground floor lobby of a public building or front door of a residence.
- Be rude or harassing to the riders.

Suspension of Service

Misusing the system may result in a suspension from the City of Alameda Paratransit Program.

Suspensions will not be imposed for circumstances that are beyond participant's control. Examples of situations not within the passenger's control include:

- A sudden personal emergency;
- Sudden or worsening illness;
- Late arrival of the Paratransit vehicle;
- A driver who does not provide appropriate assistance; or
- Disruptive behavior caused by a disability.

The following are misuses of paratransit service, which could lead to suspension:

Suspension for No-Shows

A participant with three recorded "no-shows" within any calendar quarter could be suspended for 30 days.

A total of three suspensions in a calendar year could result in being permanently removed from the program.

Suspension for Abusive or Disruptive Behavior

Disruptive or abusive behavior can annoy or endanger passengers, drivers and staff. Disruptive and abusive behavior includes but is not limited to:

- Intimidation or threats of physical harm to passengers, driver, or staff;
- Verbal abuse of passengers, driver, or staff;
- Unlawful harassment, including unwelcome verbal, non-verbal or physical behavior having sexual or racial connotations;
- Unauthorized use of vehicle equipment;
- Voluntarily and repeatedly violating riding rules, including:
 - Smoking in vehicles;
 - Refusing to remain seated and belted in;
 - Eating or drinking in the vehicle without medical indication;
 - Defacing equipment; or
 - Refusing to comply with other requirements specified in other policies stated in this guide.

The City of Alameda Paratransit Program may require travel with a caregiver to help control the participant's behavior and prevent harm to the participant, other passengers, driver, or staff.

If a caregiver cannot control the participant's behavior and a safety problem continues to exist, participation in the program may be discontinued until the situation is adequately remedied.

Suspension for Misuse of Travel Vouchers

Misusing MRTIP or Premium Taxi Service Vouchers may result in suspension of paratransit service. Service may be suspended for:

- False or misleading statements on an eligibility application; or
- Allowing non-eligible individuals, such as friends or family members, to use the service under the participant's name.

Customer Service

The City of Alameda's Paratransit Program welcomes your compliments, complaints and suggestions. We are committed to using customer feedback as a tool to improve service quality.

Compliments and Complaints

The City of Alameda Paratransit Program office should be notified when exceptional service is provided.

Complaints are taken seriously and every effort is made to resolve complaints in a timely manner. Passengers are encouraged to file a complaint when service is not satisfactory, safe or secure. To assist us in investigating service concerns, provide the following information: Name, address, email and telephone number along with the incident details including date and time.

Direct your service compliments or complaints to:

City of Alameda Paratransit Program 1155 Santa Clara Avenue Alameda, CA 94501

Tel: (510) 747-7513

Email: CityParatransit@alamedaca.gov

Additionally, questionnaires are mailed out annually to solicit input. Comment cards also are available at the Mastick Senior Center Transportation Office.



Other Transportation-related Resources

Alameda County Hospital Discharge Transportation Service

The Hospital Discharge Transportation Service provides same day door-to-door transportation for individuals who need transportation after being discharged from the hospital with a health or disabling condition preventing use of public transit.

Participating hospitals are:

- Alameda County Medical Center Highland Hospital, Oakland
- Alameda Health System San Leandro Hospital
- Alameda Hospital City of Alameda
- Kaiser Permanente Fremont, Hayward, Oakland, San Leandro
- St. Rose Hospital Hayward
- Valley Care Medical Center Pleasanton

Alameda County Network of Care

The Alameda County Network of Care is a comprehensive, internet-based resource for seniors, individuals with a disability or disabling condition, caregivers and service providers. The website offers information on social service and transportation programs. The website address is: www.alameda.networkofcare.org.

Road to Recovery

Road to Recovery is an American Cancer Society service program that provides free transportation for patients going to and from cancer-related medical treatment or appointments. For more information on this program, call the American Cancer Society at (510) 832-7012 or 1-800-227-2345.

Wheelchair and Scooter Breakdown Transportation Service (WSBTS)

Alameda CTC offers a non-emergency transportation service for individuals using wheelchairs or scooters who experience a mechanical breakdown. For more information, call 1-877-50-WHEEL (1-877-509-4335).

Miscellaneous

- CommuteChoices.AlamedaCTC.org: A transportation resource for commuters and employers in Alameda County.
- **511.org or call 511**: For route planning and up-to-the-minute traffic, transit, rideshare and bicycling information in the Bay Area.
- AccessAlameda.org: Transportation services for seniors and people with disabilities in Alameda County.

APPENDIX:

Emergency Preparedness Checklist

By the American Red Cross (www.redcross.org)

Create a Plan

Meet with household members or your personal care attendant and discuss the dangers of fire, severe weather, earthquakes, and other emergencies that might occur in your community. Store enough supplies for everyone in your household for **at least three days**.

| Post emergency telephone numbers near telephones and teach your children how and when to call for help. | // |
|--|----|
| Learn what to do in case of power outages and personal injuries. Know how to connect or start a back-up power supply for essential medical equipment. | |
| If you or someone in your household uses a wheelchair, make more than one exit from your home wheelchair-accessible in case the primary exit is blocked in a disaster. | |
| Teach those who may need to assist you in an emergency how to operate necessary equipment. | // |
| Arrange for a relative or neighbor to check on you in an emergency. | // |
| Learn how to turn off the water, gas, and electricity at main valves or switches. | // |
| Plan and practice how to escape from your home in an emergency. | // |
| Consider getting a medical alert system that will allow you to call for help if you are immobilized in an emergency. | // |
| If you live in an apartment, ask the management to identify and mark accessible exits. | // |
| Learn your community's evacuation routes. | // |
| Pick one out-of-state and one local friend or relative for family members to call if separated by disaster. | |
| Pick two meeting places: | // |
| A place near your home in case of fire. A place outside your neighborhood in case you cannot return home after a disaster. Keep family records in a watertight, fire-proof container. | |

| ASK | general questions. | | | | |
|-----|---|----|--|--|--|
| | Call your local Red Cross chapter or emergency management office. | // | | | |
| | Ask what kind of disasters could occur in your area and how to prepare for each. | | | | |
| | Ask how you would be warned of an emergency. | | | | |
| Ask | Ask about special assistance that may be available to you in an emergency. | | | | |
| | Register with the local fire department so needed help can be provided quickly in an emergency. | // | | | |
| | Ask your supervisor about emergency plans at your workplace. | // | | | |
| | Ask your children's' teachers and caregivers about emergency plans for schools and daycare centers. | // | | | |
| | If you currently use a personal care attendant obtained from an agency, check to see if the agency has special provisions for emergencies (e.g., providing services at another location should an evacuation be ordered). | | | | |
| | Establish a Personal Support Network. | // | | | |
| | Customize an Emergency Health Information Card. Keep copies in wallet, purse and emergency supply kits. | // | | | |
| | Complete an Emergency Contact List. | // | | | |
| | Collect Emergency Documents. | // | | | |
| | Store Emergency Documents in emergency supply kits, wallet, and safety deposit box. Give copies to personal support network and out of area contact(s). | | | | |
| | Conduct an Ability Self-Assessment. | // | | | |
| | Collect Carry With You Supplies to keep with you at all times. | // | | | |
| | Collect Disability-Related Supplies for emergency kits. | / | | | |
| | Maintain a seven day supply of Essential Medications. | / | | | |
| | Keep important Equipment and Assistive Device(s) in consistent, convenient and secured place(s). | | | | |
| | Write Out Instructions for items you will need help with in an emergency. | | | | |